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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2009

Media Highlights

Turkey Cries for Martyrs

All papers and TV channels widely and sadly cover the funeral ceremony held in Tokat for seven soldiers who were martyred in an ambush. Bodies of the martyrs were sent to their respective home towns to be buried there. During the funerals, demonstrations took place in many provinces to condemn PKK and terrorism.

Erdogan Blasts Israel, Genocide and the EU

Turkish media continued its extensive coverage to PM Erdogan's US visit, with emphasis today on his twin speeches at Johns Hopkins University and the new SETA Foundation. Mainstream Hurriyet headlines "My Ancestors Did Not Commit Genocide" and highlighted Erdogan's comments on the Middle East. Noting his admonition that "I am not criticizing Israel's stance in Gaza just because I am a Muslim, but because I am a human being" Hurriyet emphasized his characterization of Gaza as "an open prison...you can enter there only if Israel allows it." Regarding Armenia, he rebuffed genocide charges, and noted "if the Minsk Group resolves the Karabakh issue, parliamentary approval of the protocols signed between Turkey-Armenia, will be easier." Regarding EU membership, conservative-nationalist Turkiye quotes Erdogan saying that "We will not accept anything other than full membership in the EU." Mainstream Sabah headlines "We Got What We Wanted" and reports that PM's delegation characterized the Erdogan-Obama meeting as "very successful" and "five of the eight files brought to the table by Ankara were supported by the White House."

Editorial Whirlwind: Erdogan Aftershocks (Yeni Sefak)

Yeni Safak columnist Fehmi Koru in "Aftershocks of the Meeting" observes "every meeting in the White House has 'aftershocks,' just like in previous visits of Erdogan. Turkey's attitude on the issues of the US interest including Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Arab-Israel conflict corresponds to Obama's election platforms. Although there's been some who wished this meeting would fail, it looks like Erdogan impressed Obama with what he said and with his attitude."

Zaman columnist Ali Aslan says in "Intersection of Axis in Washington," that: "Resources from both sides say that the meetings were very positive. Turkey has gone beyond a country

profile as having geopolitical importance and military needs. Now, it's a pragmatic and self-confident country running after its national interests. The Obama-Erdogan meeting shows Turkey's value with both its symbolic aspects and its content."

Hurriyet columnist Cuneyt Ulsever in "Turkey-US Ties: Iran, Critical Threshold," says "Since the foreign policy choices of Turkey and the US do not always match for Iran, it means that Iran issue will remain as a critical threshold in the US-Turkey relations."

Milliyet senior Columnist Sami Kohen in "Standing Straight at the Summit", says that "it is understood that Turkey stood up for all its rights during the meeting in the Oval office, including on the issues Iran, Afghanistan and Armenia. Of course, this is valid only if there weren't different remarks when the leaders were alone."

"Erdogan: The Course of Turkey's Mission in Afghanistan is Clear" Zaman Online reports, in an interview with CBS TV's Charlie Rose Show on 12/8, that PM Erdogan said "Turkey's mission in Afghanistan was clear since the beginning. If we betray the Afghan people's trust, we may not be able to do the job that we are capable of." Reminded that President Obama had his first overseas visit to Turkey, Erdogan said during this visit that Obama re-characterized the US-Turkey strategic partnership, calling it a "model partnership." He emphasized that establishing model cooperation is the most important step in this process. Erdogan said Turkey could help establish Afghanistan's national army, as it did in early-1900s, and train the Afghan police, adding that he made the offer at the meeting with Obama. Erdogan said that Turkish officers could train Afghan soldiers and police in Turkey and in Afghanistan.

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Erdogan also called for a well-prepared road map in Afghanistan, saying, "if something goes wrong, we can have big troubles. In my opinion, the basis of the road map is more important and it should be the one to be focused on. If the road map is followed in coordination with the people of that region, we can have very good results."

FM Davutoglu: Israel Conflicts Are "Three Legs of the Same Stool" Davutoglu's comments at the Washington SETA forum on 12/8 led the morning news programs on NTV and CNNTurk, which in news programs and online under the headline "Israel's Gaza Attacks" highlighted "we have no tolerance for massacres any longer...regardless of religion or creed." Mainstream Milliyet Online also reports Davutoglu had harsh words for Israel: "Turkey views the Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese ties as three legs of the same stool, all supporting one another. The Israeli attacks on Gaza destroyed this balance and Israel made a big mistake during Gaza offensive. More than that, Israel committed crimes by using phosphorus in Gaza. . . We are working to support reconciliation between Fatah and HAMAS, because we realize that unless there is agreement between them, there will be no peace between Israel and Palestine." Hurriyet reported that Davutoglu saluted President Obama's Middle East approach, and referring to today's Iraq blasts, said "We won't tolerate humanitarian massacres in our region any more. Turkey condemns any terrorist attacks in Iraq irrespective of who is targeted. . . On Iran, Davutoglu emphasized that "all countries have a right to obtain peaceful nuclear energy. Turkey supports a nuclear free Middle East and global nuclear disarmament. We don't want a nuclear Iran, but nor do we want a nuclear Israel."

Washington Gives Green Light for Drones

Hurriyet senior columnist Enis Berberoglu writes in "The Secret Behind the Second Milestone: Drones" that "the reason PM Erdogan announced his meeting with Obama as "the second milestone in countering PKK terrorism," has become obvious. During the recent meetings, Washington gave the green light to deliver some critical equipment to Turkey to be used in the fight against terrorism. Within this framework, Turkey is planning to buy three drones from the US."

Climate Agreement in Danger (Milliyet) Mainstream Milliyet opines in "Climate Agreement in Danger," that "the positive atmosphere has left and in its place are concerns" at the Summit, because "the US

and China are staying distant to demands" for lowering emissions. In "Copenhagen Will Get Warm," leftist Taraf says "real bargaining will start next week" and that success will depend on American and Chinese moves on emissions. Taraf gloomily highlights Turkey's first place position as the world's fastest emitter of greenhouse gases and underlines that "this weakens the country's competitiveness." Meanwhile, mainstream Hurriyet Online headlines "Precaution At the Climate Summit: Cage to Protesters," saying "protesters from all around the world are getting ready for huge protests on Saturday," and that "police are taking the toughest precautions in Denmark's history."

Afghanistan. Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak headlines, "Second NATO Crisis in Afghanistan," and says, "NATO forces hit Lehman province in eastern Afghanistan killing six civilians. In his surprise visit to the country, Secretary Gates offered assurances. Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports, "Defense Secretary Gates arrived in Afghanistan, the first senior US official to visit with Afghan President Hamid Karzai since President Obama's announcement last week of his new strategy for Afghanistan."

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- The Constitutional Court continues to hear the case for disbanding DTP.

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- DTP activists attempt to rally in Izmir to protest suit for banning their party, but tight security measures forced them to disperse after releasing a press statement

- CHP leader Baykal criticizes the government for its determination to press ahead with the democratic opening and says that this is treason

- DTP leader Ahmet Turk denounces illegal protests and killing of seven soldiers in Tokat and says this was dark provocation

- 25 DTP officials have been taken into custody in Adana

World

- Car bombs exploded in Baghdad yesterday killing at least 127 people injuring 450 people

- Greek Cypriot FM Kyprianou said "Southern Cyprus will block EU talks in six more policy areas unless Turkey meets conditions yet to be spelled out"

SILLIMAN